

TESTIMONY OF MARTY ROSS

ON

**THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S PROPOSED RULE
"GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICIAN PANEL
DETERMINATIONS OF WORKER REQUESTS FOR
ASSISTANCE IN
FILING FOR STATE WORKERS' COMPENSATION
BENEFITS"**

RADISSON HOTEL CINCINNATI AIRPORT

OCTOBER 25, 2001

MARTY ROSS

My name is Marty Ross. I am 45 years old and I live in Portsmouth, Ohio. I started at the Portsmouth Plant in 1975 when I was 19 years old. I applied for job while I was still in high school. There were few jobs in the area following the first oil embargo and several of my parents' friends worked at the plant. I didn't know what went on at the plant but it was a job.

I started in the janitor department then moved to Production Process Operations in 1976. I moved over to the Centrifuge Plant when it started, then got bumped back when DOE pulled the plug on the project in 1985. In 1997 I bid to Stores (shipping/receiving) staying there till I was surplus back to janitors in September of this year. In all of these jobs I would be assigned several different tasks involving all sorts of job hazards, sometimes I knew a little about the area I was working in, sometimes I didn't know anything about the area or the chemicals that were present. Sometimes the knowledge that was given to me was "...ah, that stuff won't hurt you, heck you could probably eat the stuff."

As I worked in these various areas I was exposed to many chemicals, temperature extremes, loud noises, rotating shift work and radiation from different sources. I worked where the cleaning of parts was done. There were boil-out tanks and smelting furnaces. I worked in withdrawal stations and pulled samples from cell manifolds. I did leak testing, climbing all over equipment that received little or no cleaning. There were many other jobs that exposed me to harm in one way or another unbeknownst to me at the time. It wasn't until we had the public meeting that I caught on to what hazards that I had been exposed to on plant-site and the fact that it was impossible to monitor what my personal exposures may have been. This all caused me distress. But at that meeting our elected officials said that they would see that the cold war workers would get what they deserved. This made me feel a lot better about my life and about my future.

I was even more relieved when Congress passed the compensation bill. But now I am learning that some of the language and a lot of the interpretation are changing. Subtitle D was there for a purpose. There was enough support and credentials earlier to become law in the first place, it should not be deflated now. Subtitle D should be there for the workers that have given all for this country. It was set up to help those who have died or gotten ill because of their employment at this facility. The problem has not gone away nor should the protection afforded these workers.